

Erie County Ethics Board

May Meeting Minutes

May 14, 2018 8 a.m. 16th Floor Rath Building

MEMBERS:

___ Steven Schwartz, Chair
___ Chris Trapp, Vice-Chair
___ Rebecca Town, Secretary
___ Warren Galloway
___ Leslie Ortiz-Fogg, Counsel

STAFF:

___ Vianne Uthman, Administrative Staff

ABSENT:

___ Miles Gresham,

OTHERS PRESENT:

___ Ross Kostecky, Legislature Office (recording)

1. Meeting call to order 8:06 a.m.
2. April 2018 meeting minutes reviewed and approved.
3. Website Updates / Email Updates (Uthman /Town /Schwartz):
 - i. Request for opinions/actions: general questions regarding new filing forms
 - ii. FOIL Requests: On 4/10/18 attorney's in the Morton asked for FOIL for documents related to a previous investigation and fine. Due to ongoing litigation the request is being reviewed by counsel.
 - iii. Other communications: Inquiries have been received regarding confusion over the new legislation and what Financial Disclosure forms should now be submitted. Schwartz responded with clarification.
 - i. 4/30/18 Erie County Water Authority communicated a request to modify the Board's financial disclosure form. State law requires the Water Authority to file financial disclosures with the county it resides in. The new chair of the Water Authority expressed concerns that the Ethic's Board form does not address any potential conflicts between an employee's personal life and the Authority itself. In a meeting with representatives an agreement was reached that they would file two forms, their amended form that says Water Authority and an unamended Ethics Board form. As many as 43 people have been identified by the Authority to file the forms. The filing has been extended to June 15th. Going forward the Board will look for long term solutions.
4. Old Business:
 - i. (Ortiz-Fogg) Rebecca Town term will be amended to end December 21, 2019. At the last meeting Miles Gresham indicated that he will be submitting a letter of resignation. The letter has not been submitted yet. .
 - ii. No new updates in the matter of Morton vs. County of Erie, et al.: (see FOIL above)
 - iii. At a meeting with Mike Breeden on 4/4/18 the Board was informed that the Purchasing Department would conduct inquiry of a county employee with a contract as vendor by the May meeting of the Ethics Board. There have been no communications since then.
 - iv. March 30, 2018 was the effective date of new Board of Ethics legislation; Schwartz will meet with the Director of Personnel to see if county employees, elected officials and Board members have been notified of the changes to the law.

5. New Business:

- i. Financial Disclosure Forms for 2017 were distributed on April 1st. 220 have been received. After the May 21st a letter will be sent reminding people of the fine and letting them know the fine will be suspended if the forms are submitted by a specified time.
- ii. All policies and procedures related to submission of financial disclosures will be reviewed over the next year to ensure they comply with the new legislation .

6. Next meeting scheduled for Monday June 4, 2018 at 8 a.m..

7. Motion to adjourn 8:27 am.

8. Review of Disclosures